TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office

March 24, 1998 LB 1070

Nebraska because I do understand that there are needs here in the state of Nebraska. And I think the Appropriations Committee understands that there are needs here in the state of Nebraska. But all I'm asking for is to make a decision on the policy of appropriates the money for those needs. I don't think the Legislature should just have oversight. I think the Legislature should be the appropriating body. This is where the power to do those things should lie because you are elected officials. People can hold you accountable for your decisions, and they can't hold people over in the Health and Human Services Department accountable for those decisions. They don't usually connect a lot of these intricate people who are hired or political appointees over in Health and Human Services. You are the ones who are elected to appropriate the tax dollars that you take from taxpayers in the state of Nebraska for those needs, and you are going to be taking hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars through this mechanism, hundreds of millions of dollars put into the Health and Human Services Department for appropriations. And I'm saying that with my amendment what can do is bring that through the legislative process, through the appropriations process, and give us the opportunity to go ahead through the deliberative process that we have here with open hearings to the public, with the appropriations process through months and months of deciding and balancing the state budget on what the needs will be, and then coming out here with their suggestion and giving us an opportunity on the floor to decide and debate that. To me, that's a much more open, accountable process than what we're setting up in 1070, and that's what my amendment would do. It doesn't eliminate My amendment doesn't take away from anything out there as far as health care needs. None of those needs have been addressed yet with 1070. They wouldn't be addressed any differently as far as us being given the opportunity to decide if that's where the money should go instead of the department, over in Health and Human Services. So there is a concern on my part that we are setting up more and more trust funds with There is concern on my part that we're taxpayer dollars. turning into the bank of Nebraska on a lot of these things as far as loans and grants and we're competing with the private That's a bad policy. And I think the better policy is to vote for this amendment and bring that money through the same mechanism, give the \$40 million for the needs of the assisted